

We Are Climbing Jacob's Ladder

We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
We are climbing Jacob's ladder,
Soldiers of the cross.

Every round goes higher, higher,
Every round goes higher, higher,
Every round goes higher, higher,
Soldiers of the cross.

Sinner, do you love my Jesus?
Sinner, do you love my Jesus?
Sinner, do you love my Jesus?
Soldiers of the cross.

If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
If you love Him, why not serve Him?
Soldiers of the cross.

We are climbing higher, higher.
We are climbing higher, higher.
We are climbing higher, higher.
Soldiers of the cross.

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Cover Art: *Jacob's Dream of the Ladder to Heaven*. Lucas Cranach the Elder (1472-1553). Germany.

Old Orchard Church

September 19, 2010 — 10:15 to 11:45 a.m.

*Jesus said,
"I tell you the truth, you shall see heaven open, and the
angels of God ascending and descending
on the Son of Man."
—John 1:51—*

Celebrating Jesus Christ in the Vision of Jacob's Ladder

Heaven and earth, the dwelling place of God and man,
Were one before the fall in Eden;
But now, as rebel sons and daughters,
We have been driven from the presence of an undefiled God,
And heaven and earth are alienated and divided.

Thanks be to God who was not willing
To cast us out of his presence forever,
But came among us,
To reconcile us to himself,
That heaven and earth might be reunited forever!

Bless the Lord for his covenant love:
He chose fallen Abraham to give birth to his people,
And Isaac, a father who played favorites, to be son of the promise;
And to the scheming brother, Jacob,
God gave a revelation of the glory of his Son
Eighteen hundred years before he descended to save us,
Before he laid down his life for us,
Before he beat back the powers of death for us,
Before he ascended to glorify us
By bringing our humanness into heaven,
That in due time, heaven might descend to earth,
And all again be one!



Scripture Reading

Old Testament Lesson: Genesis 28:10-22

New Testament Lesson: John 1:43-51

Sermon

“Naomi: A Mother for Our Losses”

Ruth 1

Ron Lutjens, senior pastor, preaching

Jesus and Jacob's Ladder

From the Commentary on the Story of Jacob's Ladder in Genesis 28
by John Calvin (1509-64)

God showed himself to Jacob as seated on a ladder, the ends of which touched heaven and earth, and which was the vehicle of angels, who descended from heaven to earth.... [The dream foreshadows Christ because] the covenant of God was founded in Christ, and Christ himself was the eternal image of the Father, in which he manifested himself to the holy patriarchs.... For since men are alienated from God by sin, though he fills and sustains all things by his power, yet that communication by which he would draw us to himself is not perceived by us; but, on the other hand, so greatly are we at odds with God, that, regarding him as hostile to us, we, in our turn, flee from his presence. Moreover the angels, to whom is committed the guardianship of the human race, while strenuously applying themselves to their office, yet do not communicate with us in such a way that we become conscious of their presence. *It is Christ alone, therefore, who connects heaven and earth: he is the only Mediator who reaches from heaven down to earth; he is the medium through which the fulness of all heavenly blessing flows down to us, and through which we, in turn, ascend to God.* He it is who, being the head over angels, causes them to minister to his earthly members. Therefore, (as we read in John 1:51,) Jesus properly claims for himself this honor, that after he shall have been manifested in the world, angels shall ascend and descend. If, then, we say that the ladder is a figure of Christ, that interpretation will not be forced. For the image of a ladder well suits the Mediator, through whom ministering angels, righteousness and life, with all the graces of the Holy Spirit, descend to us step by step. We also, who were not only fixed to the earth, but plunged into the depths of the curse, and into hell itself, ascend even unto God. Also, the God of hosts is seated on the ladder, because the fulness of the Deity dwells in Christ; and so also that means that it reaches up to heaven. For although all power is committed even to his human nature by the Father, he still would not truly sustain our faith, unless he were God manifested in the flesh.... Christ not only approached near to us, but clothed himself in our nature, that he might make us one with himself. That the ladder was a symbol of Christ, is also confirmed by this consideration, that nothing was more suitable than that God should ratify his covenant of eternal salvation in his Son to his servant Jacob. And hence we feel unspeakable joy, when we hear that Christ, who so far excels all creatures, is nevertheless joined with us. The majesty of God, which here presents itself... to view, ought to inspire terror; so that every knee should bow to Christ, that all creatures should look up to him and adore him, and that all flesh should keep silence in his presence. But his friendly and lovely image is at the same time depicted; that we may know by his descent, that heaven is opened to us, and the angels of God are rendered familiar to us. For hence we have brotherly relations with them, since the common Head both of them and us has his station on earth.